

This, I need remind no one, is an election year. A good section of the American public not just the cynics, has always thought of this as a season which is best gotten through with the help of a good dose of healthy skepticism. With some justice the office seeker is supposed to have a bent for making a crisis out of the commonplace, for inflating or deflating the significance of this or that development depending on whether he represented the in or out party. Words and phrases like "test", "challenge", "moral fiber" and "will to persevere" have been so much used that many people regard them as oratorical flourishes and react to them as they do to background music and wallpaper..

It has been a long time since the U.S. role in the world has been under such troubled scrutiny as it is now. It is clear to me that this country knows--as a country, as a nation--that it must face up to the question of where do we go from here, and that the issues which this question

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raises are real not rhetorical.

But as we ponder our own problems, domestic and foreign, we can take some comfort from the knowledge that our chief adversaries, the Soviet and Chinese Communists, are themselves beset by considerable difficulties.

Even the pundits, I understand, despair of being able to make any sense out of the curious and complex convulsion taking place inside China under the name of the Cultural Revolution. I do not want to offer any new theories. There is no doubt, however, that this internal turmoil and the seriocomic zeal which is such a big part of it has badly damaged China's international position. The challenge from Peking has all along rested not on military or economic power but, in Asia, on a looming presence amidst a number of much smaller states of uncertain stability, and, in the so-called Third World in general on its claim to have a unique answer to the problems of economic backwardness.

But the effectiveness of these instruments in the Chinese

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political and propaganda arsenal has, at least for the time being, been greatly diminished. No one can foretell how long it will take the Chinese to get a grip on their domestic problems. Yet, I am convinced that China's most compelling motive is to establish itself as a great power and I expect that the first order of business with the successors to Mao Tse-tung will be to find ways to resume that quest.

The Soviets, too, have lately been devoting most of their energies to problems which have arisen close to home, within the USSR and in Eastern Europe. From the US point of view there are both good and bad features in this development. It has meant that the Soviets have had less time to give to other areas of interest, such as Western Europe and the Middle East, where they had been particularly active during the last year. Then, too, the US is bound to welcome what has been happening in Czechoslovakia--long one

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where a new leadership is trying, within a Communist framework, to acquire the attributes of national sovereignty and dignity. We would be doing no service to ourselves or to the Czechoslovak people if we exaggerated the extent to which the Czechoslovak regime has gone or wants to go in its program of "democratization." This is Czechoslovakia's affair and we should not act as though we thought otherwise. There is no question but what the US position in Europe during the last two decades has provided the basis for this development and we ought to have this in mind when we are contemplating our future role both in Europe and in the rest of the world. But, at the same time, we should continue--as we have been doing--to avoid the appearance of meddling. There is no reason to hide our sympathies and we should be receptive if the Czechoslovaks indicate they are ready to be helped. To go beyond this, however, would be to risk giving offense to the native reforming

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It is clear that the Soviets are already very nervous, if not anxious, about the trends in Eastern Europe. Even though they are much closer to the scene than we are and should by now have learned how to gauge and to guide the currents of change in the Communist bloc, they seem again, as in the cases of the Yugoslavs and the Chinese earlier, to have been late in recognizing the symptoms of dissatisfaction in a closely allied state and to have behaved clumsily when these signs could no longer be overlooked.

The Russians' behavior in the face of these developments is one of the negative features I referred to. Even though they may be obliged to accommodate to these changes-- which, though they will cost Moscow something in terms of authority, do not really threaten the Soviets' still overwhelming dominance in the area--they obviously are reluctant to do so, and are continuing to throw their weight around in a way which seems to be causing mounting exasperation in

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the Cold War in some of the exhortations issuing from Moscow with their summons to ideological warfare, their charges that the "imperialists" are seeking to undermine the whole socialist order, and their denunciations of "nationalism and revisionism." The Soviet public is feeling the backlash as the regime has moved to quash the movement for wider freedom of expression which had begun to attract a substantial part of the Soviet intellectual and literary community. The regime's harsh response has sent a shiver through this community and one or two brave souls have even dared to ask the regime to recall that it has itself condemned Stalinism. All in all, some very cold winds are blowing out of Moscow these days, across the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and possibly toward the West as well. At any rate, the prospects for a meaningful improvement in US-Soviet relations, for a widening of the area of constructive and responsible collaboration between the super powers seem to me to have

been damaged, and not alone for the reason the Russians

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give--Vietnam. I might add in this connection that it is my own feeling that we are misleading ourselves if we look for the Russians to do anything to help arrange a negotiated settlement in Vietnam acceptable to the US.

The turn of events in Eastern Europe, though having both pluses and minuses for us, came at a bad moment for the Russians. The signs, as I read them, were that Moscow was more confident than had been in some years--since it took cover after the Cuban misadventure in 1962--about the possibilities of strengthening its position on a number of international fronts. During the three years between Khrushchev's overthrow in October 1964 and the 50th anniversary celebrations last fall, the collective leadership had not only stayed pretty much intact, it had plugged some of the holes that were showing when Khrushchev left. The party apparatus, which had been unsettled by Khrushchev's badly conceived administrative experiments, felt much more comfortable

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military were made to think, and rightly so, that their interests were being better looked after. The Soviets had come out well ahead in their war of words with the Chinese, to the point where they were ready once again to try to organize an international conference of Communist parties to establish once and for all that Maoism is heresy. What with the feeling that the US was losing interest in Europe, lack of sympathy with the war in Vietnam, Cold war weariness, and their own generally good behavior, the Russians had never been in better aroma in Western Europe and they rated as good the chances of their being able to hasten the decline of NATO and the reduction of the US role in Europe. After a near debacle in the Middle East, the Soviets emerged in a position of greater political and military influence there.

Some of the Soviet political effort may now, it seems, be turned more or less inward. It may seem more important to Moscow to shore up the Warsaw Pact than to tear down

NATO, which is not to say that both aims cannot be pursued

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simultaneously, but only to suggest where the major effort might be put. But if this should happen I would expect it to represent only a momentary pause. The fundamental impulse of Soviet foreign policy is likely to prevail. This, as I see it, is to close the gap between the USSR and the US in those elements of national power which contribute to international authority: political influence, military power, and economic strength. If revolutionary change assists this process, well and good, but the USSR has long since ceased to count on this as the main instrument of aggrandizement. I am not trying to evoke the idea of a grand Soviet design. The Russians, too, must operate in a world in which the unexpected, the imponderable, the uncontrollable play no small part. They must back and fill, look for opportunities, encounter disappointment and results, with them as with us, are often as dependent on method as on objective. Yet if one looks at the way Soviet

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power has grown in the post-war period, he sees it flow across its own borders into Eastern and Central Europe only to be checked by superior power as it pressed in Western Europe. It was stopped also in Iran, Turkey and Greece, but we again see the Russians, now relying on conventional diplomacy and economic aid, working to reopen the doors which were slammed on them twenty years ago. Further East along the USSR's southern periphery, Moscow has managed in India to put itself on at least a par in influence with the West, thanks in no small part to sizable economic and military aid programs. And, as is now well understood, the USSR has established itself in the Mediterranean, where it was hardly visible five years ago and not at all only thirteen years ago, as a military power second only to the US.

To my mind there is no clearer sign of what the

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Soviets would like to accomplish in the years ahead than the present trend in their military investment. I have in mind not only the steady rise in the military budget-- which Moscow has declared to be up by 15% this year-- but also the uses to which these increased funds are being put.

Senator's remarks on Soviet ICBM and ABM programs, which appear on p. 5 of address at Stanford, could be reused in this context⁷

We can, therefore, it seems to me look for the area of conflict and competition between the US and the USSR to widen, not shrink, in the years ahead, unless, of course, the US chooses not to accept the challenge. I do not expect this to happen because I believe that the US, as indeed the USSR, will continue to recognize that, like it or not, it cannot, given its power and influence and its need to preserve them, stand on the sidelines. I am not projecting a situation of constant tension between us

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and Moscow nor do I think we should think we have to go the Russians one better in every department. One of the main tasks of our policy-making machinery will be to keep the rivalry between us and the Russians at a safe level and to pick and choose the points of engagement with care. In formulating national policy we must, however, start from the prudent assumption that the Soviets are not interested in reducing the area of engagement nor in pursuing a long-term detente with the US.

There are, of course, many ingredients in the strategic equation other than the relative strengths of the US and the USSR and the state of their relations, important as those are. Some of these ingredients, such as the condition of the NATO and Warsaw Pact alliances, are pretty much known quantities. The possibilities for conflict within and among the nations of the Third World

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is an important unknown. But to my mind, the greatest question mark, as I suggested earlier in my remarks, hangs over the future course of mainland China. I am thinking not so much about China's economic and military potential, for these too can be plotted into the future with a fair degree of assurance. What we cannot be sure of--no matter how many questions we might feed into computers--is how the Chinese, with Mao gone (as I presume he will be within a few years at most) will make themselves felt politically on the world stage and in Asia in particular. Consider, for instance, how different the balance of forces in Asia would be if China and the USSR were once again collaborators rather than competitors. Consider the impact on the orientation, not only of the smaller states of the area, but of keystone nations like Japan, India, whose security has owed much to the inability of the two great Communist states to act together.

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How much likelihood is there that Moscow and Peking will be able to achieve some kind of reconciliation? As matters now stand, antagonism between them could hardly be greater. Each does its best to frustrate the objectives of the other wherever and whenever the opportunity arises. Though neither has renounced the 1950 Mutual Assistance pact, they have acted in recent years on the assumption that in the military sphere they are more likely to encounter one another in the role of enemies than of allies. For example, the Russians, have been steadily but without let-up, during the last three years in particular, adding to their strength in troops and weapons all along the Sino-Soviet frontier from Central Asia to the Far East. There is, in addition, every reason to suppose that in constructing their strategic defenses, such as the ABM, the Soviets are mindful of a potential future missile threat from China. Soviet decisions are

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bound to be influenced in other ways by the Chinese factor: the rate and scope of development of Siberia, which has considerable import for Soviet economic planning and investment, is a case in point. China, then, unquestionably weighs heavily on Soviet decision-making. Imagine, as a rough comparison, how our own planning would have to be altered if Canada and Mexico were potentially hostile states.

Now the question I raised was whether in the foreseeable future there is any possibility that these conditions will change. I think we must assume that there is such a possibility.

The case for this proposition was stated very well by Philip Mosely in 6-7 Nov. 1967 Hearings before Atomic Energy Committee

The Soviets plainly are keeping their options open.

The military buildup I referred to is not a haphazard one,

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and it points to a continuing, long-term reinforcement of the Soviet-Chinese border. Also apparent is the fact that the Soviets think there are better days ahead for them in Peking after Mao is gone. Nevertheless, there are very strong, underlying sources of friction and rivalry in the Sino-Soviet relationship which will work against anything more than a temporary and superficial reconciliation. There are built-in strains in dealings between countries which, though living side by side for centuries, have never established rapport with one another and whose cultural traditions are radically dissimilar. Racial antagonism, though of course never admitted, is I am sure very real on both sides. I understand that in private conversations in the USSR and Eastern Europe the term Yellow Peril crops up often. Add to these barriers the natural rivalry of two of the world's largest nations, one

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a superpower and the other on the make. This is magnified by the ideological conflict, which no matter what its origins, has opened a yawning chasm between them in the way they view the world. The Soviets would be foolish if they rendered assistance to the Chinese on a scale which would close the material gap between them and bring closer the day of a new and more dangerous confrontation.

These are two views, in both of which there is inevitably a large element of conjecture. My own preference is _____. But even if the accommodation between Moscow and Peking were temporary and limited, such a development would send a tremor through many parts of Asia which are feeling uncertain and insecure enough as it is. We should recognize that the US posture at the time could be counted on to have a great deal to do with the impact which Sino-Soviet accommodation would have in the area. But more important is the influence

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which our actions, the degree of our involvement or non-involvement, might have on the process of accommodation itself. If the past is a reliable guide, then we must conclude that US strength and commitment not only do not have the effect of drawing Moscow and Peking closer together but instead amplifies their mutual suspicions and accentuates their natural differences.